

Christian F. Phillips House
120 St. James Street
Kingston
Ulster County
New York

HABS No. NY-5572

HABS
NY
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18-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. NY-5572

CHRISTIAN F. PHILIPS HOUSE

Location: 120 St. James Street, Kingston, Ulster County,
New York.
Latitude 41° 55' 48" Longitude 74° 01' 00"

Present Owner: Mrs. George W. Pratt Estate.

Present Occupant: Descendants of Mrs. George W. Pratt.

Present Use: Residence.

Significance: This is a large, elegant house in the Greek
Revival style, designed with the obvious
assistance of a pattern book and adapted to its
in-town site.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The house was built circa 1848-53.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners:

1848 Deed: 25 February 1848, Recorded: 5 March 1848
liber 69, page 641
Cornelius C. Smith
Margaret Smith, his wife
to
Christian F. Philips

1853 Christian F. Philips died circa 7 June 1853

Heirs: Rozina Philips, widow
Edward Philips, his son

1881 Edward Philips died 27 February 1881
Only heir: Rozina Philips, his mother

- 1897 Deed: 27 March 1897, Recorded: 27 March 1897
liber 335, page 627
Rozina Philips
to
Harry V. Haines
- 1928 Deed: 26 March 1928, Recorded: 23 December 1929
liber 542, page 329
Harry V. Haines
Mary Haines, his wife
to
Clarence J. Kelly
Geraldine A. Kelly, his wife
- 1931 Will written: 23 July 1929, Proved:
6 November 1931
liber 14 of wills, page 316
Clarence J. Kelly, deceased
to
Geraldine A. Kelly
- 1931 Deed: 12 November 1931, Recorded: 12 November 1931
liber 555, page 342
Geraldine A. Kelly
to
Angus T. Joy
- 1932 Deed: 15 August 1932, Recorded: 16 August 1932
liber 560, page 330
Angus T. Joy
Augusta R. Joy, his wife
to
Hamilton Boyd
- 1960 Will written: 8 July 1943, Proved: 28 July 1960
liber 38 of wills page 118
Hamilton Boyd, deceased
to
Helen L. Boyd, his wife
- 1960 Deed: 1 October 1960, Recorded: 3 October 1960
liber 1098, page 1199
Helen L. Boyd
to
Florence D. Pratt

1972 Florence D. Pratt died 22 August 1972

4. Original plan and construction: It appears that the east wing may originally have been a smaller, one-story kitchen.
5. Alterations and additions: Sometime in the nineteenth century the east wing was apparently enlarged to its present size.

After the present owner, Mrs. Pratt, who bought the house in 1960, had it remodeled and decorated. The kitchen was extended to connect with the garage, the attic stairs were removed and replaced with a pull-down stair, the main stairhall has been rebuilt (it once ran from front to back of the house, and a bathroom on the first floor now occupies the rear location), and a large picture window was placed in front of the east wing (original middle Doric column was removed for this window). The northwest chimney has been removed through the house to allow for a furnace flue.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Before 1841, Fair Street terminated on the north side of St. James Street. An earlier house on this property, belonging to the heirs of Isaac DeWitt, was demolished about this time to make way for the Fair Street extension (liber 57 of deeds, page 217).

C. Bibliography:

Deeds, County Clerk's Office, Ulster County Office Building, Kingston, New York.

Wills, Surrogate's Office, Ulster County Office Building, Kingston, New York.

Prepared by William C. Badger
Historian
Historic American Buildings
Survey
Summer 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This fine example of a Greek Revival house was inspired by pattern books in the mid-

nineteenth century. Its Palladian shape has been modified by the omission of a wing in order to fit its urban site.

2. Condition of fabric: The house is in excellent condition, although it is extensively remodeled on the interior with little feeling for the classical mode.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The main block of the house is 24' -3" (three-bay front) x 31' -6", with an east wing, 16' -3" x 16' -2", and rear additions, approximately 16' -3" x 32'. Both the main block and the wing of the original house are two stories. The modern kitchen and garage addition are one story.
2. Foundations: The house has a stone foundation.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The exterior walls of the house are of milled wooden frame construction with horizontal siding. All corners have Doric pilasters. The whole house is painted gray with white trim.
4. Structural system, framing: Wooden frame construction supports the house. The roof structural system, which is visible in the attic, consists of heavy timber plates into which roof rafters are notched.
5. Porches: The main block has a Ionic tetrastyle portico topped with a pediment. The columns are made of wood, fluted, with no base, although they do have bluestone plinths. The entablature is Ionic without the stepped frieze. The pediment contains a small window. The soffit of the porch is plastered and painted a delicate sky blue color. The floor of the porch is bluestone and is approximately eight inches above the sidewalk level. The east wing has a porch with a shed roof and two square Doric columns (originally three, before the addition of a large picture window in front of the wing).
6. Chimneys: Three large brick chimneys exist, two on the west and one at the end of the east wing.

7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The entrance doorway in the portico has a frontispiece with classical details. It has a pedimented, shouldered architrave, and a wooden sill. There is a four-light rectangular transom which is separated from the door and side lights by a full entablature. The horizontal member is supported by engaged Doric columns and half-columns. The door has two vertical, elongated panels above and a horizontal, rectangular panel below.

At the west side of the house is a modern door, with glass panes and wooden panels, leading to the kitchen.

- b. Windows and shutters: Each window in the original part of the house is a six-over-six-light double-hung sash with a pedimented lintel and a thin sill. The windows in the front and rear gables are scaled-down versions of the same window. All windows have movable louvered shutters painted white. The first floor on the east wing has a large, multi-paned picture window under the porch. A modern eight-over-eight-light double-hung sash with shutters lights the kitchen addition at the west elevation. On the east elevation the kitchen also has small, sliding double windows, and the garage has a six-over-six-light double-hung sash window.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: A gable roof with a pedimented front shelters the main block of the house. The east wing and the modern additions are also gabled. All roofs are covered with asphalt shingles.
- b. Cornice: A well-proportioned Ionic entablature surrounds the main block and the wing. It is broken in the gable ends of the back and side elevations.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: There is an undivided basement with a concrete floor under the main block of the house and the east wing. A small room with thick stone walls exists in the northeast corner, and may have been an access to the outside. The basement contains an oil-burning furnace and is also used for storage.

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- b. First floor: The entrance is in the left bay of the main block and leads to a stair hall that once ran front to back in this part of the house. The back portion of this hall is now a modern bathroom. The west side of the main block contains identically styled double parlors with a large opening between them. The east wing contains a large dining room and this opens into the new kitchen addition. To the rear (south) of this addition is an attached garage.
 - c. Second floor: The second floor rooms are similar to those of the first floor in dimensions and arrangement. There is an open-well stair hall on the east side of the main block which has a new bath at the end of it. The other end of the stair hall has closets built into it. The large bedrooms occupy the west side of the main block. The east wing of the house contains a large bedroom which opens into a small square bedroom on the south. Next to this bedroom is a stair that leads downward into the first floor kitchen addition.
- 2. Stairways: The principal stair is an open-well, open-string stair with finely turned mahogany balusters and heavy, ornate newel and molded handrail. The stair also has a cove molding of simple design. The molded baseboard curves to become the wall stringer. The stair rail curves at the top of the stairs and continues along the upper well.
 - 3. Flooring: The first floor is carpeted in the parlors and hall. A new hardwood tongue-and-groove floor has been added to the dining room. Ceramic tile now covers the floors in the bathrooms and the floor covering in the new kitchen addition is vinyl. The northeast bedroom upstairs has new tongue-and-groove flooring, but the southeast bedroom has random-width board flooring that appears to be original.
 - 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Some rooms have painted plaster walls and some have paper and vinyl wall coverings. The baseboards in both downstairs and upstairs are molded.
 - 5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The doorways have shouldered architraves in the Greek mode. Almost all original doors

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on the ground floor have been removed. There is a similarly encased opening for double doors between the parlors. Doorways in the parlors have entablatures with prominent projecting cornices.

- b. Windows: The windows in the original part of the house are topped with shouldered architraves.

6. Mechanical Equipment

- a. Heating: The parlor and dining room fireplace mantels have architraves with flanking pilasters. The mantel in the southwest bedroom has a paneled architrave and a molding which surrounds the opening, but no pilasters. All three existing fireplaces are operable, however, the house is now heated by an oil furnace.
- b. Lighting: No overhead fixtures exist except in the dining room which has a recently installed fixture.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting: The house sits a few feet from the sidewalk facing north on St. James Street. Fair Street runs very close to the west side of the house and there is a tight boundary on the side of the east wing. The kitchen addition and garage take up almost the entire rear, except for a drive and a walk next to the house.
- 2. Walks: Large bluestones in rear lead from the house at the kitchen addition to Fair Street. A bluestone walk in the front is extended to an area in front of the porch of the east wing.

Prepared by: William C. Badger
Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
Summer 1972

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) under joint sponsorship of the National Park Service and the Kingston Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission with financial assistance from the New York Council on the Arts. Measured and drawn during the summer of 1972 under the direction of John Poppeliers, chief of HABS and under the supervision of Roy Eugene Graham (University of Texas at Austin) by student architects Philip D. Ward (University of Washington), A. Carol Boerder (University of Texas at Austin), M. Morgan Gick (University of Notre Dame), and Stephen O. Fildes (Texas Tech University). The drawings were edited in December 1972 by architect John Burns. The written architectural and historical data was prepared by William C. Badger (University of Pennsylvania), the project historian, and edited in January 1980 by Susan McCown, a historian in the HABS office. The photos were taken in August 1973 by Jack E. Boucher of HABS staff.

ADDENDUM TO
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